

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend claim 1 and add new claims 7-15.

1. (Currently amended) A connector assembly for connecting an inflatable article to an inflation source, the assembly comprising:
  - a semi-rigid, hollow connector housing having a first, generally tubular, insertable section, insertable ~~into the inflatable article~~ through an opening in a flexible wall of said inflatable article, and a second external section extending oppositely from the insertable section and outwardly from said flexible wall upon insertion, the external section and the insertable section being connected and oriented at an angle of less than 180 degrees with respect to each other, the two sections providing a continuous air passageway therethrough that is configured to pass through a bend and to pass into the inflatable article upon insertion therein, said passageway extending from an external opening in said external section and being removably connectable thereat to said source of inflation fluid, through the connector assembly, and into the inflatable article,
  - wherein said insertable section has an external circumferential groove therearound which, upon insertion into and through said wall opening, is secured thereat by an elastic washer positioned immediately adjacent to and concentric with said wall opening, said washer being press-fit into said groove, the washer providing a seal at said wall opening, thereby sealing off leakage of fluid to or from said inflatable article and confining fluid passage to and through said passageway, thereby providing, when assembled, a low-profile pathway for fluid communication from said external source into said inflatable article through a wall opening thereof, and
  - wherein said external section further comprises a pressure relief valve.
2. (Original) The connector assembly of claim 1 providing a seal effective to a pressure gradient of at least 70 mbar.
3. (Original) The connector assembly of claim 1 providing a seal effective to a pressure gradient of at least 200 mbar.

4. (Original) The connector assembly of claim 1 wherein the housing and insertable section are integrally formed into a unitary construction.
5. (Previously presented) The connector assembly of claim 1 wherein the insertable section has an internal end within the inflatable article and the washer is press-fit over the internal end onto the insertable section.
6. (Canceled) The connector assembly of claim 1 wherein the washer is positioned adjacent to an internal wall of the inflatable article.

Please add new claims 7-15 as follows:

7. (New) The connector assembly of claim 1, wherein the pressure relief valve comprises a pressure relief opening and the external section further comprises a valve material covering the pressure relief opening.
8. (New) The connector assembly of claim 7, wherein the valve material comprises an elastic tube on the external section covering the pressure relief opening.
9. (New) The connector assembly of claim 7, wherein the valve material covering the pressure relief opening comprises a longitudinal slit oriented atop the pressure relief opening.
10. (New) The connector assembly of claim 7, wherein the valve material covering the pressure relief opening forms an air channel when an internal pressure exceeds the pressure to open the pressure relief valve.
11. (New) The connector assembly of claim 1, wherein the passageway is configured to pass through a substantially right-angle bend.
12. (New) A connector assembly for connecting an inflatable article to an inflation source, the assembly comprising:
  - a semi-rigid, hollow connector housing having a first, generally tubular, insertable section, insertable through an opening in a flexible wall of said inflatable article, and a second external section extending

oppositely from the insertable section and outwardly from said flexible wall upon insertion, the external section and the insertable section being connected and oriented substantially at a right angle with respect to each other, the two sections providing a continuous air passageway therethrough that is configured to pass through a bend and to pass into the inflatable article upon insertion therein, said passageway extending from an external opening in said external section and being removably connectable thereat to said source of inflation fluid, through the connector assembly, and into the inflatable article,

wherein said insertable section has an external circumferential groove therearound which, upon insertion into and through said wall opening, is secured thereat by an elastic washer positioned immediately adjacent to and concentric with said wall opening, said washer being press-fit into said groove, the washer providing a seal at said wall opening, thereby sealing off leakage of fluid to or from said inflatable article and confining fluid passage to and through said passageway, thereby providing, when assembled, a low-profile pathway for fluid communication from said external source into said inflatable article through a wall opening thereof, and

wherein said external section further comprises a pressure relief valve comprising a pressure relief opening and a valve material in the form of an elastic tube on the external section covering the pressure relief opening.

13. (New) The connector assembly of claim 12, wherein the valve material covering the pressure relief opening comprises a longitudinal slit oriented atop the pressure relief opening.
14. (New) The connector assembly of claim 12, wherein the valve material covering the pressure relief opening forms an air channel when an internal pressure exceeds a pressure to open the pressure relief valve.
15. (New) The connector assembly of claim 12, wherein the passageway is configured to pass through a substantially right-angle bend.